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SUBJECT: TFHA01: EMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE EARTHQUAKE SITREP as of 1800,  
February 3, 2010

¶1. (SBU) Summary: Parliamentary elections originally scheduled for the end of the month are officially postponed until further notice. The Prime Minister attended a Senate hearing to defend the government's response to the earthquake. Protests against the government remain peaceful and small. President Preval extended the state of emergency. Police officers are increasingly reporting for duty. Despite logistics constraints, Haiti's garment sector has recommenced exports to the U.S. and will further benefit from new legislation introduced in the U.S. Senate today. End Summary.

#### CEP POSTPONES ELECTIONS

¶2. (U) The Provisional Electoral Council (CEP) officially announced on February 2 that parliamentary elections were postponed until further notice. One of the CEP's buildings collapsed in the earthquake. President Preval had already implied that elections would be postponed. It is uncertain when parliamentary elections will be held, or if the presidential election, scheduled for November, will be postponed as well.

#### PM BELLERIVE AT SENATE

¶3. (SBU) Prime Minister Jean-Max Bellerive and several ministers, including Paul Antoine Bien-Aime (Interior) and Alex Larsen (Health), attended a Senate hearing to defend the government's response to the January 12 earthquake and the slow delivery of relief. Bellerive defended the presence of foreign troops on Haitian soil to assist in aid delivery, but conceded that the GOH had little control on the distribution of relief, which the NGOs have managed so far. Bellerive had turned down the Senate's request last week, and his appearance with key ministers signalled an apparent intent to cooperate with the legislative branch.

¶4. (SBU) Both the Senate and Lower Chamber are still holding sessions at their new location on the grounds of the Police Academy. Lower Chamber President, Levaillant Louis-Jeune, remained confident that the issues of reconstruction, postponed elections and constitutional reform could be addressed through a political consensus, while new parliamentary commissions continued to reach out to various sectors in their efforts to formulate a strategy for

reconstruction.

#### MORE PROTESTS, BUT SECURITY SITUATION STABLE

¶15. (SBU) Additional peaceful protests have taken place since last week. On February 2, a small group shouted anti-Preval slogans in front of the new GOH offices near the airport. On February 3, about 1000 protesters gathered in Petionville to express grievance over the alleged theft of food aid destined for a shantytown by the Mayor of Petionville. Another group of 400 individuals linked with this group marched down to the Embassy carrying an upside down American flag. The group's leaders, all young men, expressed their discontent with the GOH's response to the disaster in their conversation with Embassy officials, citing corrupt leadership, and wished for the USG to take over Haiti's recovery process. All protests have remained peaceful so far, and while the situation is tense because of built-up frustrations with the provision of basic needs, security incidents remain sporadic.

#### STATE OF EMERGENCY EXTENDED

¶16. (U) President Preval extended the state of emergency by another 15 days, extending the initial 15 days announced on January 16. Parliament will have to approve any further extension.

#### POLICE REPORT FOR DUTY

¶17. (SBU) As of February 3, HNP DG Andresol reports that no police units have been paid to date, despite reports that several specialized HNP units were already paid. The HNP received the payroll checks on February 2, and is in the process of distributing to each Department and unit.

¶18. (SBU) The HNP reported that on Sunday, January 31, over 3,000 officers reported for duty during the day shift in Port-au-Prince and surrounding areas. Prior to the earthquake, a normal Sunday turnout would have been 1,600 officers. NAS attributes this unusually high turnout to the distribution of food to HNP officers, and the hope that they would receive pay checks.

#### GARMENT EXPORTS RESUME

¶19. (SBU) Haiti's garment sector, supported by USAID contractor CHF International and sub-contractor TC Squared, is reaching out to the apparel industry worldwide to remind them of Haiti's resilience and commitment to the garment sector. The response from current and potential clients has been extremely positive; they remain interested and supportive of Haiti's garment sector. Separately, USAID, members of Congress, President Clinton, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), and others have voiced their continued commitment to the sector.

¶10. (SBU) Initial data collected with the help of Gregor Avril, Executive Director of the Haitian Association of Industries (ADIH), reveals the current state of garment factories. Of the eighteen factories in Port au Prince, two must relocate and completely rebuild from the ground up, and the vast majority need to undertake minor to moderate repairs, clean-up, and reconstruction. In addition, cash-flow needs of the apparel-assembly sector for the next three months exceed USD 6 million total.

¶11. (SBU) During the week of January 25, several factories were able to resume production, with more expected to come back on-stream in the coming weeks. Hanesbrands made a public statement regarding its three primary T-shirt sewing operations in Haiti; all three have at least partial production under way as of this past week. All of their facilities have been inspected by engineers and have been cleared to resume production and safe occupancy. They expect all of their employees to be working by the first week of February. Customers in the U.S. confirmed that finished garments were already shipping out of Haiti via private ports, with raw materials trucked in through the Dominican Republic. Logistics constraints, while not wholly solved, have been partially resolved more quickly than expected.

¶12. (SBU) The USAID-supported Haiti Apparel Center (HAC), which began training new sewing machine operators in November 2009, was scheduled to hold its official inauguration on February 3. However, HAC's building in SONAPI Industrial Park is temporarily lending space to USAID for a medical supplies warehouse. USAID expects to return the space by end-March to finish the renovation and complete repairs for the HAC to become fully operational.

#### US SENATE INTRODUCES LEGISLATION TO BOLSTER HAITIAN ECONOMY

¶13. (U) On February 2, Senators Ron Wyden and Bill Nelson filed a bill entitled "Renewing Hope for Haitian Trade and Investment Act of 2010." The Renewing Hope for Haiti Act is intended to provide short-term relief to Haiti's apparel sector, which prior to the quake accounted for three-quarters of Haiti's exports. It extends current trade preference legislations, including the Caribbean Basin Trade Preference Act (CBTPA) and the Hemispheric Opportunity through Partnership Encouragement (HOPE II) Act, and provides for a Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) presence in Haiti, in addition to establishing an interagency Haiti Recovery and Investment Task Force, led by the Secretary of Treasury.

¶14. (SBU) Comment: This legislation sends a positive signal to U.S. retailers and producers in Haiti and the Caribbean, and should also send an encouraging message to the more than 25,000 Haitian factory workers who rely on garment factory jobs to provide for themselves and their families. End comment.  
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